



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

## ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA03-012

Prompted By: RQ03-004

Date Opened: 25-Jul-2003

Date Closed: 11-Apr-2005

Principal Investigator: Bruce York

Subject: Rear brake line failure

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company

Products: 1995-97 Crown Victoria, Grand Marquis, and Town Car

Population: 785,181

Problem Description: The rear brake lines may fail, resulting in increased stopping distance.

### FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	21	128	149
Crashes/Fires:	2	2	4
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	419	419

\*Description of Other: warranty claims

Action: This Engineering Analysis has been closed. Recall 05V-086.

Engineer: Bruce York

Div. Chief: Richard Boyd

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 04/11/2005 *JP*

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**SUMMARY:** In a letter dated February 25, 2005, Ford Motor Company (Ford) notified ODI that it would be conducting a customer satisfaction program (Ford No. 04B26) to correct a rear brake line chafing concern in approximately 44,000 model year (MY) 1997 Ford Crown Victoria and Grand Marquis non-fleet vehicles equipped with electronic traction control that were built after March 19, 1997. These vehicles have an additional rear brake line and a mastic patch causing reduced clearance from a stiffening rib in the floor pan. ODI's analysis showed higher complaint and warranty rates related to rear brake line failures in this population than in other subject vehicles and peer mid-sized passenger cars that were evaluated during the investigation. Vehicles involved in Ford's program will have the rear brake lines inspected for contact with the floor pan stiffening rib. If there is contact, but no abrasion or leakage, the brake lines will be repositioned. If there is abrasion or a leak is evident the brake line will be repaired. If necessary, both of the rear brake lines will be replaced.

Though Ford does not admit to a safety-defect in the subject components, ODI believes that the facts in this investigation show otherwise because the insufficient clearance in the routing of those brake lines may result in leaks in those lines that may result in increased stopping distances. ODI is designating the campaign a safety recall (NHTSA Recall No. 05V-086). Because of the low rates of brake line failures in the remaining subject vehicles, a safety-related defect has not been identified in those populations and further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists in those vehicles. The agency reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances. For additional information, see the attached closing report.

*JP*  
4/24/05